

OUR NATIONAL RELATIONS

WITH

CHINA.

BEING

TWO SPEECHES

DELIVERED IN

EXETER HALL

AND IN

THE FREE-TRADE HALL, MANCHESTER,

BY THE

BISHOP OF VICTORIA.

LONDON:

T. HATCHARD, 187, PICCADILLY.

1857.

[*Sixpence, or Four Shillings per Dozen.*]

W. M. Watts, Crown Court, Temple Bar.

AT THE FIFTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY MEETING of the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, held in Exeter Hall on the Morning of Wednesday, the 5th of May 1857, the President, the EARL of CHICHESTER, in the Chair; the first Resolution having been moved by the Lord Bishop of London, and seconded by the Dean of Carlisle, the second Resolution was moved by the Lord Bishop of Victoria.

“That this Meeting, while it would express its deep concern at the late manifestation of a fanatical and sanguinary spirit amongst the revolutionary party in China, and also at the infraction of peace at Canton, as well as the events in Turkey and Persia, would nevertheless remember that the God of nations has often, in the history of Missions, overruled the darkest providences for the furtherance of His truth; and would cherish the hope that He will yet cause the late wide dissemination of His holy word in those countries to bear fruit, and make the wrath of man and the diplomacy of Governments subservient to the entrance of Gospel light.”

The BISHOP then spoke as follows—

My Lord, Ladies, and Gentlemen—The Resolution which I have been requested to move has an almost exclusive reference to our Mission in China: and although, since I last attended a Church Missionary Meeting in this Hall, eight years ago, it has been my privilege to visit a considerable part of the Society's foreign field of labour, and although, on that account, the Report which has been read this day carried with it peculiar interest to my own mind; yet I feel that I shall best fulfil the task which has been imposed upon me, and most satisfactorily consult the wishes of this Meeting, if I altogether limit my remarks to those great events which are now occurring in China. I know, My Lord, that there has been no period at which the friends of Christian Missions did not feel considerable interest in the great empire of China. The very name of China a few years ago called up feelings of mysterious wonder. The vast extent of her territory, the greatness of her population, the antiquity of her historic records, her isolated position

among the kingdoms of the earth, the peculiar character of her social institutions, and the long period during which she has succeeded in maintaining her seclusion from the rest of the world, have all combined to invest with a peculiar interest the subject of China. But at the present time that vast empire awakens a special interest in the minds of the friends of Christian Missions. You know that the subject of China has lately occupied a large portion of the time of the British Legislature—that for several evenings it formed the subject of exciting debate in both Houses of Parliament—that it endangered the stability of the Administration—that it was the occasion of the dissolution of Parliament, and of an appeal to the popular sentiment of the country; and the name of China has recently been sounded as a war-cry and watchword of political contest in every constituency in the land. And when I remember, too, those startling incidents which have lately been reported to us from China—when I remember the perilous position in which our Missionaries and all classes of the British community are now placed in the south of China, and more especially at Hong-Kong—when I remember that they are exposed, not merely to the ordinary danger of a foreign residence, but to the cup of the poisoner, the knife of the assassin, and the torch of the midnight incendiary—I feel, My Lord, that the subject of China may well excite a mingled feeling of interest and anxiety in the mind of every Christian philanthropist at this moment.

I believe, My Lord, that we are on the eve of very great events in China. We must all be prepared for checks, perhaps reverses, and for more than one campaign in that part of the world. We have to deal with a most unintelligible people, and a most impracticable Government. I believe that God will overrule all these events for good, and that what is passing in China will issue in the extension of the Gospel of peace. But we must all have observed how continual is the danger of Great Britain being involved in hostilities at every point in her foreign possessions. Along the extended frontier of her colonial empire Britain has an element of weakness and a vulnerable part at every point of contact with the barbarism of uncivilized regions. She is in continual danger of collision with the native races, wherever she is brought into vicinity with semi-barbarous tribes, the treachery of aboriginal races, and the haughty and turbu-

lent violence of Oriental monarchies. Hence arise new and continually-recurring complications, embarrassments, and collisions, resulting in the unforeseen acquisition of territory, and the enlargement of our foreign possessions. And, My Lord, I feel that it is unjust to charge every addition of new territory upon the ambition of individual British statesmen, or to accuse indiscriminately on that account any man, or any body of men, of a cruel, violent, and aggressive policy. I believe that it is a fatality, a destiny, a great law of Divine Providence attending the administration of the British empire, that in every part of the world we are impelled forward in spite of ourselves—that in all directions we are unhappily compelled to extend our territory, and new dominion is forced upon us: and if we would be wise in discerning the signs of the times, and if we would ward off the retributions of God's judgment for our national shortcomings and omissions, we should regard these additions to our empire, not as a means of national aggrandisement, but rather as opportunities placed in our hands by Providence of extending the Redeemer's kingdom abroad, thus rendering them instruments, not of our national decay and ruin, but of glorifying God, and of extending the influence of the Christian religion. My Lord, four years ago I was staying in the neighbourhood of Calcutta with Lord Dalhousie, that distinguished administrator of our Eastern empire, who remained at his post, I believe, for a longer period than any other Indian Governor-General in past history. In private conversation with that Noble Lord, whose guest I was at the time, I was struck with his recognition of this great truth of the providential extension of our empire as a means of conferring on distant races the blessings of Christian civilization, which appears to have been impressed upon many of our statesmen in the East. I remember hearing from Lord Dalhousie that he came to India with a firm determination to pursue a peaceful policy; that he entered upon his government sincerely resolving to be tempted by no occasion to extend our territory, but to bend all his efforts towards strengthening and consolidating our magnificent empire in the East. But he had not been long in India before events on the north-west frontier led to some of the most sanguinary engagements of modern times, and eventually to the annexation of the Punjab. At that very time the artillery of Fort William was saluting the successful conclusion of the war

with Burmah and the annexation of the province of Pegu. More recently, we have heard of Lord Dalhousie terminating his government by the further extension of our Indian territory and the annexation of the kingdom of Oude. Not very long since, another Governor-General, Lord Canning, was entertained at a civic feast in the City of London. On that occasion the Governor-General elect declared that the chief aim of his policy would be to develop the internal resources of India, and to pursue a system of peace: and yet no sooner does he arrive at his seat of government, than he issues a public document declaring war with Persia.

The same principle is observable in every part of the world. As regards China, I believe that the present Governor of Hong-Kong was at one time the least likely of all public officials to involve Great Britain in a war with that empire. I wish to be understood as pronouncing no judgment respecting the wisdom or the policy of the proceedings which have led to the deplorable disturbances at Canton. It must not be supposed that I stand here publicly to express either condemnation or approval of the official acts of Sir John Bowring. Nor let it be supposed that I have any sympathy with the religious or the political school to which Sir John Bowring belongs. But I trust I may be excused for saying this much of an absent friend and neighbour, that if a kind and humane heart, a benevolent disposition, a sincere interest in the welfare of the Chinese race, and a warm sympathy on behalf of every thing which he believed to be calculated to advance their welfare, could have secured any British Plenipotentiary against a collision with the authorities of the Chinese empire, then I believe Sir John Bowring was the man who might have been expected to avoid such a disaster. And yet we find that a man who was carried into office on the shoulders of the Manchester party, and who was at one time Secretary of the Peace Society, has, by his course of recent proceedings, offended all his former friends, and become the instrument and the occasion of involving Great Britain in a collision with the local authorities of Canton, and, it is to be feared, with the general and Imperial Government of China.

Now, what is the general lesson which I deduce from these facts? It is, that a great law of Divine Providence seems to be carrying us onward; that in the face of known

avowals of a pacific policy our administrators abroad are continually involved in unhappy conflicts with those with whom they desire to be at peace; that the dangerous vicinity of semi-barbarous misrule and the unprovoked aggression of frontier tribes, lead to the unavoidable and involuntary extension of Civilized power; that it appears to be an inevitable condition of the tenure of British rule throughout the world, that we are impelled forward in spite of ourselves; and that the friends of Christian Missions, and every truly Christian statesman, may well view with alarm—may well be appalled at—the prospect, unless every new accession of territory is made an opportunity of advancing the Redeemer's kingdom, and every new addition to the empire of Britain is laid as an humble national contribution at the foot of the Redeemer's cross.

But, My Lord, I feel that this great country is placed at the present time in a peculiar position towards China, in reference to the great revolutionary movement which is now agitating and convulsing that land. Whether we regard the external military progress, or whether we regard the internal religious development, of the Tae-ping movement, there are three stages into which it may be conveniently divided. In the first place, you all remember the rapid advance of the Tae-ping rebels from Kwangse and the mountain-fastnesses in the southern extremity of China; how, in the course of as many months, they took the capital cities of no fewer than four of the eighteen provinces of China; how they pursued a rapid career of victory through the heart of the country, till at last they took the city of Nanking, and located themselves permanently within the old capital of the empire. You will remember, too, that since their capture of Nanking, a little more than four years ago, they have sent out other expeditions into distant parts of China, and especially one large expedition which was intended to capture Peking. You will remember, also, that some three years ago that northern army of Tae-ping rebels seems to have been conquered by the frosts and snows of the northern provinces of China, having also been brought into collision with large bodies of Tartar levies in the north. That expedition failed; the army appears to have been almost annihilated; for a time at least the Tae-ping movement in China was, as regards its

external military progress, checked and retarded; and thus terminated the second stage of the great central rebellion in the interior provinces.* We now approach the third stage. A new course of tactics was pursued by the rebel chief. For the last two years he seems to have aimed especially at the consolidation and concentration of his military power in Nanking and the neighbourhood. Thence he has sent forth expeditions in various directions: and it is calculated by a prudent Chinese scholar and Missionary labouring in that country, that, taking into account all the cities which the rebel chief has captured, and where, instead of following the course formerly pursued in such cases (that of abandoning captured cities and pressing onward to new conquests), he has established a settled form of Government, and is collecting a revenue—it is calculated, I say, that, taking into account all the different departmental cities and districts where the Tae-ping Government is now regularly established, the territory ruled over cannot comprise less than twenty-five millions of people; and if foreign nations do not interpose, I believe it is probable, though of course it is not certain, that the rule of the Mantchoo-Tartar dynasty will be subverted in the southern half of China, and that a dynasty which, in its own strange way, professes to be a Christian dynasty, will be erected on its ruins.

But, again, with regard to the internal religious development of the movement, you will remember how, in the first stage of its course, the nations of the West were startled by the intelligence, that, in a country like China—a country so long shut out from the rays of western civilization—a country at whose door the diplomatists of different western lands had long knocked for admission, and knocked in vain—in that same country a mere handful of Protestant Missionaries, labouring but for one generation near the coasts, had been the means, in the hands of God, of translating and diffusing the

* The Tae-ping Central Rebellion in China, having its base of operations at Nanking, must not be confounded with the local rebels who captured and held for some time the cities of Amoy and Shanghae, and threatened the city of Canton. The latter consist of the members of various secret societies, which cause difficulty not only in China, but to the rulers of our own settlements at Singapore, Malacca, and Penang, and in Borneo.

Holy Scriptures; so that they had been fermenting in the minds of a portion of the native population in the interior, and had influenced, if not originated, a movement which had engrafted upon the Confucian monotheism of China some of the more prominent truths of Bible and Christian history. You will remember the second stage of this movement; how the excessive expectations which had been too eagerly formed were shocked by reports of fanatical excesses at Nanking, and how a period of undue re-action succeeded the over-sanguine hopes which were previously cherished. You will remember, too, the third stage; that in the month of August last, Yang, the Eastern King, the Simon Magus of the Tae-ping movement,* was removed by a violent death. He established a reign of terror in Nanking; his violence excited hostility on the part of those who were subject to him; and at last there was a combination and conspiracy, to which he fell a victim, resulting, also, in the slaughter of the person through whose machinations he was put to death. Thus, by deaths in battle with the Imperialists, or by internal feuds at Nanking, four of the subordinate kings have been removed, and at the present moment there remain but Tae-ping-wang himself, the chief of the movement, and the man who was fifth in order below him, commonly called the Assistant-King. I cannot but think that the strength of the rebellion is considerably increased by the death of Yang, the Eastern King, and

* This is the man who styled himself, in one of the later edicts, "*The Holy Ghost, the Comforter.*"

There are evidently two classes of men among the leaders—the one bringing the Confucian and Rational element into the movement, the other, the Materialist and Fanatical element. Yang, the Eastern King, who evidently belonged to the latter party, addressed a foolish letter, full of absurd fanaticism, to Sir John Bowring, two or three years ago, and appears to have exercised a mischievous influence at Nanking. His death may possibly remove one of the principal dangers to the political ascendancy and religious progress of Tae-ping-wang. But with such internal elements among the Tae-ping leaders, it will be wise for the friends of Christian Missions to form very moderate expectations of the immediate results to the cause of true Christianity. This, however, is no valid reason why British statesmen should hereafter be tempted to form an ill-considered treaty with the Chinese Government and to purchase commercial privileges, &c., at the price of foreign aid in maintaining the Mantchoo dynasty and extinguishing the Tae-ping rebellion.

his colleagues. I believe that the most mischievous and dangerous element in the revolution has thus been taken out of the way; and it may have been part of the decrees of Divine Providence that this solution of previous difficulties should occur.

But I feel, My Lord, that notwithstanding the corruptions, fanaticism, and blasphemies perceptible in some of the insurgent documents, we should not look with indifference and undue severity of judgment upon this movement, even as it now exists. I cannot esteem it a slight result of this strange movement, that it has given to the reading millions of China a portion of the Protestant version of the Holy Scriptures; that it has led to the circulation of the word of God among that motley assembly of eastern iconoclasts; and that the public manifestoes of the Chief enjoin upon his followers the daily offering of a form of prayer which would not disgrace the lips of Christians in this land. I know that we can feel no personal confidence in the leaders of this movement; I know that they will not bear to be judged by the strict standard of British Christianity; I know that, at best, they are but a body of imperfectly-enlightened Pagans, groping their way, amid almost unprecedented disadvantages, to the attainment of a better system. But my chief ground of confidence, under God, is, that there is a measure of Christian truth underlying the superstructure of error which has been raised upon it: my principal foundation of hope from this movement is, that the Chief has officially recognised, and published with his own *imprimatur*, portions of the Christian Bible, and is giving to the reading millions of China the word of God—the Protestant version of the Holy Scriptures—in a tongue read and understood by the people.*

* A Chinese manifesto was brought down from Nanking three years ago, in H.M. steamer "Rattler," issued in the name of the Chief, and abounding with sentiments of Communism, which appears to be a prevailing principle in the severe rule which is exercised over the Tae-ping followers at Nanking. In the course of this political document there is an incidental allusion to the Old and New Testaments. The Bishop has collated the copies of Genesis, Exodus, and Matthew's Gospel, published by Tae-ping-wang at Nanking, and finds an exact agreement with the version made principally by the late Dr. Gutzlaff, and published originally at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In the

But, before I sit down, I should like to refer to a pamphlet which has been recently published in China by an Imperialist soldier, who was for a time mixed up with the Tae-ping movement. This man appears to have watched for an opportunity of escape from the rebels; and having succeeded, and arrived at Shanghae, either because he wished to express his real views, or from a desire to please the authorities at Shanghae, he wrote a pamphlet, in which he abused his former friends. This pamphlet was first composed in Chinese, and apparently printed in the same language at Shanghae: it has since been translated into English, and printed in the columns of the 'North-China Herald,' a local English newspaper at Shanghae. Now, after making the necessary deductions on account of its being the account of an enemy of the rebels, I find in this document evidence of the prevalence of a reign of terror, and an infliction of sanguinary severities, which

fly-leaf, containing the list of books published with the *imprimatur* of Tae-ping-wang, and circulated by his authority, the titles, "OLD TESTAMENT" and "NEW TESTAMENT" are elevated two spaces in the column above the level occupied by the books issued with TAE-PING-WANG'S own name and title—an honorary distinction usually accorded only to the Divine name and titles. The *Expositions* given of the *Old and New Testaments* by the vexillaries, &c., alluded to in the manifesto, are probably of a nature and tendency calculated to awaken the worst fears as to the semi-pagan interpretations put upon Holy Writ in the absence of Protestant Missionaries, now unable to penetrate from Shanghae through the Imperialist flotilla on the Yang-tze-keang.

"Land Regulations and Political Economy of the Celestial Dynasty."

"In every circle of five and twenty families, the youths must every day go to the church, where the vexillary is to teach them to read the *holy books* of the OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, as well as the proclamations of the duly appointed Sovereign. *Every Sabbath*, the five cinquevirs in the circle must lead the men and women under their charge to the church, where the males and females are to sit in separate rows. On these occasions there will be preaching, thanksgivings, and offerings to our Heavenly Father, the great God and Supreme Lord. * * * *

"All officers and people throughout the empire, who universally keep and obey the *ten commandments of heaven*, and follow the orders of their rulers, thus faithfully serving the State, shall be considered as faithful subjects, and shall be raised from a low to the highest station, with honours descending to their posterity. * * * *

"All officers and people, both within and without the Court, must every Sabbath go to hear the *expounding of the Holy Book*, &c. * * * *

"Throughout every seven times seven *Sabbaths*, the prefects, tribunes, and centurions, shall go in turns to the churches belonging to each vexillary under their jurisdiction, and *expound the Holy Book*, instruct the people, and examine whether they obey or disobey the *commandments*, also as to whether they are diligent or slothful.

it is most appalling to contemplate. The manner in which the Chiefs propagate their new system of religion certainly would not commend itself to European minds; but we must remember that they are Orientals, and view them with all the tolerant indulgence which may reasonably be claimed for a body of men who are placed under such disadvantages. But while a perusal of this native pamphlet reveals many dreadful atrocities as prevailing in Nanking, it must be allowed also, on the other hand, that there is an incidental mention in this document of circumstances sufficient to convince every unprejudiced mind that there is a substratum of Christian doctrine recognised and propagated amongst that motley host. For instance, I perceive, amidst the abuse with which this Chinese pamphleteer covers the Tae-ping leader and his followers, a mention of the enforcement of the Decalogue. The following is the passage to which I refer: "Adopting ten prohibitory commandments, the rebels put to death those who transgress them, and chastise those who cannot repeat them *memoriter*. But what advantage it can be to such rebels as these to worship the Supreme Ruler I do not know." He afterwards goes on to say—"When one of them dies, he is thought to have gone up to heaven: it is regarded as an occasion of rejoicing, and no one is allowed to weep. Still, when the son of the Eastern King died, his tears fell like rain, and his eyes were never dry." He mentions, also, their daily offering of religious prayers to the Almighty. He quotes only the first clause or title of those prayers; but I have the whole of the original prayers in Chinese in this book [exhibiting it to the Meeting], which was published by Tae-ping-wang himself, and brought by the British Plenipotentiary four years ago to Shanghai. He mentions one prayer as being entitled, "A Prayer for a Penitent Sinner," which I have here, but will not trouble the Meeting by reading. This hostile critic also alludes to the offering of another prayer, morning and evening. "Moreover," he says, "these chief rebels are accustomed, morning and evening, to lead on all their associates in rehearsing the doxologies and hymns of praise prepared by Fung Yunshan. Before every meal they repeat, in a low voice, 'We, kneeling down upon the ground, reverently give thanks to the heavenly Father,' &c. Also at night, when they retire, and in the morning, when they arise, they repeat prayers." Now I will read to you the whole of the daily prayer to which he refers

in order that you may see that, in spite of all the deteriorations and corruptions which exist, there is, according to the testimony of the hostile critic who sent forth this pamphlet within the last six months, a vast deal in this movement which claims the sympathy and good wishes of the friends of Missions in general. This is the prayer which he states to be offered up to God night and morning—

“I, Thine unworthy son [or daughter], kneeling down on the ground, pray to Thee, the great God, our heavenly Father, that Thou wouldst grant me Thy merciful protection, and constantly bestow upon me Thy Holy Spirit, to change my wicked heart, and never more allow me to be deceived by demoniacal influences; but, perpetually regarding me with favour, that Thou wouldst for ever deliver me from the evil one, through the merits of our Saviour and heavenly brother, the Lord Jesus, who redeemed us from sin. I also pray Thee, the great God, our Father in heaven, that Thy will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. That Thou wouldst look down and grant this my request, is my heart's sincere desire.”

I will only quote one other passage from this pamphlet: it is that in which are mentioned the subjects of the literary examinations at Nanking. I need not remind this assembly that the cultivation of the national literature of China is greatly encouraged, and that literary examinations are the recognised medium of promotion to the civil offices in the State. I read with great interest, some time ago, a statement made by the British Consular Interpreter at Shanghae, Mr. Meadows* (a gentleman unconnected with Missions, and there-

* In his volume on the Chinese and their Rebellions, Mr. Meadows gives expression to views which many persons would deem over-sanguine, and to some of which the Bishop must not be supposed to subscribe. But that an official gentleman, who has, in his capacity as British Consular Interpreter, visited Nanking, and has an extensive acquaintance with China, should publicly identify his name with the following opinions respecting the Taeping rebellion, is a striking fact at the present juncture.

“THE EASTERN PRINCE HAS STATED IN WRITING, THAT UNDER THE RULE OF THE TAE-PINGS THE BIBLE WILL BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THE SACRED BOOKS OF CONFUCIANISM AS THE TEXT-BOOK IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE EXAMINATIONS.”

“In spite of my capitals, and in spite of my having dwelt so often, and with so much emphasis, on the influence of these Examinations, as the free avenue to the thousands of posts in the empire, from district magistracies to premierships; and notwithstanding that I now remind the reader of the stirring effect, that

fore not likely to form an over-sanguine estimate of Missionary prospects in China), to the effect, that, in the event of the ultimate success of the Chinese rebellion, there is every prospect, on the explicit declaration of some of the insurgent leaders themselves, of the Christian Scriptures being substituted for the Confucian classics, as the basis of the competitive examinations of candidates for admission to the civil offices of the empire. In this pamphlet, published, as I have said, about six months ago, I find the native writer mentioning with great indignation and wrath the dishonour done by the rebels to their ancestors by withholding worship from them, and also the introduction of new religious subjects as themes for the literary essays. He complains, in effect, that they are destroying all reverence for the Confucian classics. He says, "At an appointed time, previously to the birthday of any of the kings, the scholars are required to attend a literary examination in the Examination Hall. The themes given out for essays are such as the following" [Here is a little piece of self-aggrandisement on the part of the Eastern King]—"May the Eastern King live 9000 years!" and "How different are the doctrines of true religion from those of the world!" "For the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of graduates, one of each is selected ;

the opening to competition of but forty places a year in the exile of tropical India has already had on every higher educational establishment of the British isles ; in spite of and notwithstanding all this, I fairly despair of imparting an adequate idea of the importance of that resolve of the Tae-pings, nor of the immense significance which it gives to the piece of yellow shading in the middle of the accompanying map of China. Upon the gradual extension or diminution of that piece of shading, during the next ensuing years, it depends whether or not, in a prosperous population of 360,000,000 of heathens, all the males who have the means and are not too old to learn—all the males from boyhood to twenty-five or thirty years of age who can devote their time to study—will be assiduously engaged in getting the Bible off by heart, from beginning to end. Should the thing take place, it will form a revolution as unparalleled in the world for rapidity, completeness, and extent, as is the Chinese people itself for its antiquity, unity, and numbers." (Page 446.)

"The resolve of the Tae-pings to make the Bible the Text-book at their public-service Examinations will cause a number of intelligent Chinese private gentlemen, as well as officials, and all of them masters of their own language, to devote themselves to the study of the Hebrew and Greek, in order to read the Book in the original languages." (Page 448.)

"If the Tae-pings succeed, then four hundred and eighty millions of human beings, out of the nine hundred millions that inhabit the earth, will profess Christianity and take the Bible as the standard of their beliefs ; and these four hundred and eighty millions will comprise precisely the most energetic and most civilized half of the human race." (Page 449)

"Like Mahomed, he (Tae-ping-wang) finds *slavery* and *polygamy*, and does not abolish either ; but unlike Mahomed, he has adopted the *Christian Scriptures* and Christian principles of morality, a step which cannot fail to end, in time, both slavery and polygamy." (Page 482.)

of the Hanlin (the next in their scale) some tens are selected; and some hundreds for the next degree (Tsin-sz). The king, whose birthday is to be celebrated, presides as principal examiner at the previous examination." I have here a translation of the hymn which is given as a subject for literary essays; and when I read it, you will perceive that there is a large proportion of definite Christian doctrine recognised among this remarkable body of men. The subject of the literary essay is, "How different are the true doctrines from the doctrines of the world!" Only the first line is quoted in the pamphlet of the Imperialist critic; but I am enabled to read to the Meeting the remaining portions of the hymn, of which it forms the introduction, in one of the Tae-ping authorized public formularies, of which I have before spoken. From the extract thus completed, you will be able to perceive the religious element which exists in some of their manifestoes.

"How different are the true doctrines from the doctrines of the world!
 They save the souls of men, and lead to the enjoyment of endless bliss;
 The wise receive them with exultation, as the source of their happiness;
 The foolish, when awakened, understand thereby the way to heaven.
 Our heavenly Father, of His great mercy and unbounded goodness,
 Spared not His first-born Son, but sent Him down into the world
 To give His life for the redemption of all our transgressions,
 The knowledge of which, coupled with repentance, saves the souls of men."

Now, My Lord, what is the reason that I have dwelt so much on these encouraging features of the Tae-ping movement? It is not, of course, that I wish this assembly to carry away with them the false notion that I look upon this body of men as, in any strict sense of the word, Christians. I know the vague sense, the wide latitude, with which the term "religion" or "Christianity" must be applied to such a system as I have been referring to. I have no confidence in the personal leaders of the rebellion; but I cannot help thinking that God, who in His providence has permitted a movement containing within it so many elements of essential truth, must needs intend to accomplish indirectly, by means of the Tae-ping Revolution, some great and marvellous ends for China. It is not, therefore, in order that we may fraternize with the leaders of the Tae-ping movement, or may flatter them in their self-conceit and self-complacency, that I have pursued this line of argument; but I have dwelt upon this matter because I view with considerable apprehension the future course of British

and French diplomacy in the East. There are very peculiar dangers now environing the path and encompassing the course of our British statesmen, in connexion with China. In China, we, who at a distance anxiously watched the progress of the great European war in which our country has been recently engaged, read with a great degree of satisfaction of the Anglo-French alliance. We perused with the deepest interest the intelligence brought by each mail of the rivalries and feuds of six centuries being buried in the tombs of the heroes who fell at Alma and Inkermann; and I certainly would not now say one word in depreciation of the character of that able man who sways the destinies and wields the imperial sceptre of France. But this I will say, that it is obvious to my own mind that the French have a large fleet in the East; that they have no commercial interests to watch over and foster in those eastern seas; and that their fleet has too often served as a kind of roving squadron of Missionary police over the broad waters of the Pacific, being employed to abet, as at Tahiti, the disputed claims and to assist in redressing the imaginary grievances of the Jesuit propagandists throughout the East. And when I remember that the Romish propagandists in China have always viewed the Tae-ping Revolution with peculiar odium and dislike—when I remember that in the early stages of the rebellion those native Reformers, just emerging from idolatry, and not yet being skilled in the art of making a distinction without a difference, did confound Buddhist idols with Romish images, and did deface and mutilate the shrine of some Roman-Catholic chapel—I see in this sufficient to account for the hostility of the Roman-Catholic Missionaries in China. My Lord, I trust that the distinguished nobleman who has lately left the shores of Britain on his honourable, difficult, and responsible mission to China, will go forth with his mind guarded against evil counsels on the spot, and prepared, not merely to promote the lower material interests of commerce, but also to fulfil the just expectations entertained respecting him, as the representative of the chief Protestant Christian Power of the West in the important negotiations which he is to conduct; and especially to vindicate the Christian character of Great Britain with regard to the odious and un-Christian traffic in opium. I have to express my earnest hope, above all, that he will not permit the vessel of diplomacy to drift into a war of

armed foreign intervention on behalf of the Mantchoo-Tartar dynasty, and for the suppression of the Tae-ping movement. My Lord, it would be one of the most grievous errors and sins that ever marked the page of Britain's history or the course of a British diplomatist, if such a result followed. I trust that the statesman who now fills the office of Premier in this land—and to whom that aggregate body and influence which in the flippant language of the day is often designated “Exeter Hall,” owes a vast debt of gratitude at this time for having comprehended the true wants of the Church of England, and for having given to the Episcopal Bench honoured names which I will forbear from mentioning at the present moment—I trust, I say, that that distinguished statesman, whose fame will go down to posterity, and who will fill a niche in the temple of history on account of his lengthened career of political success, and as the long-trying, faithful, and consistent opponent of slavery and the slave-trade—I trust that he will not, in the evening of his declining days, suffer the lustre of his brilliant career to be tarnished and obscured by sanctioning, or permitting any member of his Cabinet to sanction, under any contingencies of the future, a foreign armed intervention to support the cruel, sanguinary, barbarous, and effete Mantchoo-Tartar dynasty, and to extinguish a native movement like the Tae-ping Revolution in China. I should be sorry if that feeling which has been excited in reference to the Minister of the day, should be reversed through any thing that may hereafter occur in China. I trust that the friends of Christian Missions on both sides of the Atlantic—I trust that the members of the British Legislature—above all, I trust that the subjects and citizens of Christian Britain—will make it manifest to the Government of the day in future times, when I shall no longer be here to lift up my voice in regard to this matter, that they are not prepared to look with passive indifference on the course of British diplomacy in the East.

THE BISHOP OF VICTORIA
ON
THE OPIUM TRAFFIC.

[*From "The Record," March 25, 1857.*]

AT the ANNIVERSARY MEETING of the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, held in the new Free-trade Hall at Manchester, on Tuesday evening, the 17th inst., presided over by the Bishop of the diocese, and attended by upwards of 3000 friends of the Society and a considerable body of the neighbouring clergy, the Bishop of Victoria, as one of the Deputation from the Parent Society, delivered a lengthened address on the various interesting topics in connexion with China, which at the present crisis engross the public mind.

In the course of a speech of one hour's duration, the Right Reverend speaker dwelt upon the principal features of the revolutionary movement now convulsing that empire; the marks of preponderating hopefulness as to the ultimate results to Protestant Missions from the portions of the Holy Scriptures published under the official sanction of the Chief; and the mingled hopes and fears with which he looked upon the future of the great Central Chinese Rebellion. He referred also to the special prominence given to China at the present time, as a country, the very name of which was reverberating throughout the land, and formed a war-cry of political contest in every constituency of Great Britain. He felt it was no part of his to interfere in the passing politics of the day. His vocation was to preach the Gospel of peace. He was in England, after several years of absence, to renew for a time his shattered health, and to refresh his weary spirit by communion with his brethren

in the ministry of the Church at home. It was neither necessary nor wise, even with a prudent regard to health (as he conceived), that he should mingle in questions of political agitation or topics of exciting debate. But there were certain fair occasions and certain great questions, on which, as a Christian Missionary and as a Christian Bishop, he had reasonable claims to speak and be heard with no uncertain voice.

The question of opium-smuggling in China appeared to him * to come under that category, and he spoke with all the warmth of strong convictions on the subject, as one of vital interest to the spread of the Gospel and the cause of Christian Missions in China. He requested the large assembly before him to bear in mind some of the more prominent facts of this question. At the beginning of the present century, the then reigning Emperor of China established an Opium Main Law, and interdicted by the severest penalties the smoking of opium, that pernicious, sensual indulgence, which, on the universal testimony of Missionaries in China, was declared to be most destructive to the health, the morals, the social prosperity, and the national resources of the Chinese; presenting a serious obstacle in the way of Christian Missions in that empire, and reflecting discredit and reproach upon the Christian character of Great Britain, by whose complicity in the opium system that great evil was mainly promoted and upheld. At the time of the Imperial prohibition of opium, above half a century ago, only 2000 chests were annually imported into China. The evil had not then assumed such gigantic dimensions as to occasion any serious injury to China, by destroying the balance of trade, and causing a large drain of silver from that country—no slight argument and proof that moral considerations of the evil effects of opium indulgence to his people, and not mere apprehensions of Sycee bullion “oozing out” from the country, principally, if not exclusively, influenced the councils of a Pagan Emperor in exterminating this evil from among his subjects. But the quantity of opium smuggled into China fearfully increased every year. The East-India Company had raised a revenue from the monopoly of the poppy grown in their own dominions, and a heavy transit duty on that grown in the native independent States on its way to the sea-coast. By the system of Government sales the Anglo-Indian Government realized, at the present time, nearly three millions sterling of

revenue from the proceeds of a contraband traffic carried on along the coast of a weak and almost defenceless Pagan empire. The balls of inspissated poppy-juice were prepared, and the chests packed, by the agents of the Company, knowingly and expressly for the special tastes and requirements of the Chinese market. The quantity of opium raised was annually increased in quantities such as not suddenly to increase the supply, nor to lower the prices paid to the Company. Each chest of opium, on an average, cost a Chinese purchaser 100% English money. Between 70,000 and 80,000 chests now find their way each year into China, and drain that empire of nearly 8,000,000% sterling, expended on an injurious article of sensual indulgence, unproductive to commerce, and destroying the very sinews and strength of Chinese industry and the national resources. At the time of the last British War, in 1840, the evil had increased, in one generation, from 2000 chests to near 40,000 chests a-year. Since the Treaty of Nanking, while the legitimate imports of European manufactures into China had scarcely increased at all, the contraband importation of opium was nearly doubled in quantity. English steamers carried the Company's opium as an article of export from India to Hong-Kong. There it was transhipped into British and American clippers. These bore it to the entrance of Chinese rivers, or to the outside limits of our consular ports. Native smugglers there took it on board their smuggling craft. The local mandarins too generally preferred a quiet connivance at the illicit traffic, with the addition of pecuniary bribes, to the dangerous alternative of loyal obedience to the Emperor's prohibition of opium, with the perilous contingency in prospect of a possible collision with foreigners. The local Chinese mandarins, corrupt and venal as a class, had also before their minds the ruin of the patriotic but unfortunate Commissioner Lin. And thus the present state of things had come to pass. The Anglo-Indian Government knowingly and designedly raised an annual revenue of near three millions sterling on the proceeds of a Chinese contraband traffic. Some of our statesmen, professing to have no more virtue than their neighbours, pretended that the opium revenue was necessary to Indian finance. The English Government was implicated in this demoralizing system of wholesale smuggling. English vessels assisted the native Chinese in transgressing the benevolent law against

opium of the Government of a heathen empire. Chinese mandarins were rendered corrupt and treacherous to their own Emperor. And (what was the worst feature of the case) the character of the most powerful country of Western Christendom was compromised and disgraced by complicity with this evil, to the wide-spread injury of the Chinese nation, and the permanent injury of the sacred cause of Christian Missions. They, the citizens of Manchester, were especially interested in this question. The contraband trade in opium interfered to a serious extent with the legitimate trade in British manufactured goods. The vast empire of China was one of the most promising and lucrative markets and outlets for the cotton and woollen manufactures of Manchester and Leeds. The money now spent in opium would, under other circumstances, be spent on English imports into China. China offered facilities for European commerce possessed by few nations on the globe. Lying between twenty degrees of latitude, she combined the various products of tropical climes with the staple commodities and growth of temperate regions. Her population was thrifty, industrious, and disposed to exchange native produce for the merchandise of the West. But the sensuality of opium-indulgence overpowered the more sober attractions of ordinary commerce; and English manufactures were beaten out of the field by the stronger force of sensual temptation. He called upon the citizens of Manchester to use all constitutional methods of repressing this evil, and of inducing the East-India Company to wash their hands clean from the guilt of connexion with this evil.

There was another reason why he wished to see a termination to our national connexion with opium-smuggling. In the present disordered state of China, opium might almost be said to have taken the place of Sycee silver bullion in the ordinary monetary transactions of trade. The opium system was so intermixed and interwoven with the wide-spread ramifications of legitimate commerce, that he believed that not a few members of his flock and personal friends in China, men of benevolent disposition and of the highest respectability in the private intercourse of social life, were implicated in this system against their better convictions, and were almost involuntary participators in the contraband traffic in

opium. For their sakes, for the sake of many highly respectable merchants in China, he desired to see the connexion of the East-India Company with an opium revenue forthwith dissolved, and a termination to the temptations in the way of English merchants. He trusted that the East-India Company would awake to the un-Christian nature of the opium monopoly, and, under the moral pressure of the Christian Legislature of Britain, would be induced cheerfully to sacrifice their opium revenue on the altar of our national Christianity and of China's material and moral welfare.

The Bishop adverted also to the fact that Tae-ping-wang, in his religio-political edicts from Nanking, had included the "smoking of opium," equally with "amorous glances" and "libidinous songs," among the virtual breaches of the seventh command of the Decalogue. The Bishop predicted the possibility of danger to the Chinese insurgent body from their protest against opium, and his fears lest they might thereby be involved in a collision with foreigners.

Alluding to the recent appointment of a special envoy to China, he expressed his hope that the distinguished statesman selected for this post might carry with him to his new and difficult mission a mind not only alive to the lower material interests of English commerce, but also deeply imbued with a sense of responsibility to God and comprising within the range of his desires and aims the larger interests of the Missionary cause in China. For himself, he trusted that the new Plenipotentiary to China would go forth, not only bringing to his work all the *prestige* of his great abilities and high name, but also followed by the good wishes and the fervent prayers of the friends of Christian Missions; that no evil counsels on the spot might ever precipitate him into a hasty and ill-advised collision with the Tae-ping leaders at Nanking; but that, exercising a large forbearance and wise tolerance towards a body of native half-enlightened pagan reformers, groping their way, through almost unprecedented disadvantages, towards a purer system of religious truth, our special envoy to China might avoid the danger of an armed joint intervention with French propagandists of the Papacy against the Tae-ping leaders at Nanking.

In conclusion, the Right Rev. speaker expressed his con-

fidence in the leadings of Providence in reference to the spread of Christianity in China, and dwelt upon some of the present results of Missions in China, as seen in the reverence shown to a Protestant version of the Bible in the Tae-ping edicts, as an evidence that we are on the threshold of great events in the East, and the kingdom of Christ will finally be established in that long-benighted land.

